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ROUND TABLE

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A RADIO DISCUSSION OF

BALKAN BLITZKRIEG

IRVING B. PFLAUM
LOUIS GOTTSCHALK
HUGH M. COLE

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ROUND TABLE

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NOTE

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BALKAN BLITZKRIEG

A UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO ROUND TABLE BROADCAST*

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LOUIS GOTTSCHALK, Professor of History, University of Chicago

HUGH M. COLE, Instructor in History and Lecturer in the Institute of Military Studies, University of Chicago

*A radio discussion broadcast from Leon Mandel Hall on the University of Chicago campus over the Red Network of the National Broadcasting Company, Sunday, April 6, 1941, at 1:30 P.M., Central Standard Time. This was the first ROUND TABLE to be broadcast before an audience, and marked the opening of University Week, an event in the University's Fiftieth Anniversary Celebration.

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BALKAN BLITZKRIEG

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MR. GOTTSCHALK: I suppose you have noticed that today is April 6—a very historic date. Twenty-four years ago the United States entered the first World War, which thereupon turned the corner. About fifteen hours ago Germany's war machine started moving toward the Yugoslav and Greek borders.[1]

Pflaum, as a journalist, you have been following these things very carefully. Do you suppose this means the present war has turned the corner?

MR. PFLAUM: I definitely do. I think this is one of the biggest corners of the war; but it would be a mistake, it seems to me, to take it all by itself.

MR. GOTTSCHALK: How else would you take it?

MR. PFLAUM: It ought to be related to some of the other things that have happened in the last two or three weeks: first of all, the passing of the lease-lend bill.[2] There is a very strong relationship between that bill and what happened in the Balkans.

MR. COLE: I would like to add to that a number of very im-

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[1] *The German invasion of Yugoslavia and Greece began in the early morning of Sunday, April 6, 1941, with assaults by the German army in the Struma River Valley upon Greek frontier posts in Thrace and Macedonia. The first Axis attack upon Greece, that by Italy, began October 28, 1940, only to be pushed back a few weeks later into the Albanian mountains.*

[2] *The "lease-lend" bill (H.R. 1776) was passed by Congress and signed by President Roosevelt, March 11, 1941, and was later implemented by the passage of a $7,000,000,000 appropriation measure.*

portant military events: first, the landing of a British expeditionary force, or at least a portion of such a force, in the Balkans; second, Italian defeats in Africa and in the Mediterranean; and, finally, of course, the revival in Yugoslavia of an important army as an independent fighting force.[3]

MR. PFLAUM: You mean the revolt and revolution in Yugoslavia?

MR. COLE: Exactly so!

MR. GOTTSCHALK: This seems to me little short of a miracle. Only a very short time ago one thought of Yugoslavia as an ally of the Axis, and now we have Yugoslavia turned completely around as an ally of England and Greece.

MR. PFLAUM: A miracle that no doubt surprised the Germans as much as it surprised anyone and that certainly sent a feeling of hope running across the Continent of Europe—hope that may be translated into action in the future.

MR. GOTTSCHALK: The miracle is not merely the change in sides that Yugoslavia has made. It is also a miracle that the Croats and the Serbs have begun to act together.

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[3] *British troops are reported to have been landing in Greece since early in March (for an estimate of their number, see the comments of the* ROUND TABLE *speakers on page 21). Italian defeats in Libya, ending with the capture of Bengazi and the movement of British troops as far as El Agheila (both since recaptured by German units), were followed by British pressure in Italian East Africa—Eritrea, Italian Somaliland, and former Ethiopia—which, on April 6, the day of the German invasion of Yugoslavia and Greece, brought about the capture of Addis Ababa, capital of Ethiopia. The "revival . . . . of an important army" was accomplished by the revolutionary movement carried through on the evening of March 26, 1941, by General Dusan Simović, when the "capitulatory" government which had signed a pact with the Axis on March 25 was ousted from power.*

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MR. COLE: I will have to enter a plea here for the efficacy of the German army. The fact that the American people and the English and their allies felt so hopeful when they heard that one nation had dared stand up against Germany is the finest compliment that has thus far been paid to the German army.

MR. PFLAUM: It is a compliment to the German army, but it is also a compliment more than anything else to the Serbs themselves. Don't forget that they are very nearly surrounded by enemy troops. This is the first time since Poland that any nation has dared to defy the Germans in any circumstance, and the position of the Serbs today is far from good.

MR. GOTTSCHALK: The unity of the Serbs on this occasion is a fact that we should bear in mind as something quite extraordinary. Only about ten years ago (I think) Radić was assassinated by Serb opponents. Radić was the leader of the Croat Peasant party and, as a consequence, that seemed to indicate a great deal of ill feeling between the two peoples. Moreover, besides the Croats, there are the Slovenes.[4]

MR. PFLAUM: I can remember, when I was in Belgrade, hearing the story that the Croats would sell out to the Germans at the first drop of the hat; there would not be a chance of their entering a war cabinet. Today Maček is in the government, and, as far as we know, he is going to move with the cabinet.

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[4] *Officially, Yugoslavia is the "Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes," but there has often been ill feeling between the various parts of the kingdom. In 1929 this feeling flared up after Stjepan Radić and two other leaders of the Croatian Peasant party were assassinated in the Yugoslav parliament by a Serb. The Croatian Peasant party, representing virtually all members of the Croatian minority, later won a considerable degree of autonomy and "home rule" in the agreement signed in 1939 between the then Prime Minister, Dr. Cvetković, and then Croatian leader, Vladimir Maček.*

MR. GOTTSCHALK: As vice-premier?

MR. PFLAUM: That's right!

MR. COLE: I must take a gloomy view again. We have no definite proof yet that a majority of the Croats and Slovenes, who constitute about a third of the 16,000,000 population of this kingdom, will stand and continue to resist after their homelands (Croatia and Slovenia) are overrun.[5]

MR. GOTTSCHALK: It is important that they are standing together, and for the present no one can tell to what extent that will be an important and decisive factor.

MR. PFLAUM: They might give in—if the Germans conquer most of their homeland they will give in—but in the meantime they have put up a fight that is going to help morale throughout the Continent. You can't forget that!

MR. GOTTSCHALK: I'd like to ask what difference it actually makes whether Yugoslavia is on one side or the other. Is it an important military and political factor?

MR. PFLAUM: I would say that the first and most important difference is that here you have Hitler, for the first time in this war, being forced to do something he did not want to do: taking the offensive. He is taking action in what might be called his "little breadbasket," and spoiling his show down in the Balkans—a show which included peaceful penetration and a new order without resistance.

MR. GOTTSCHALK: You mean that this upsets his plans or has an important moral effect?

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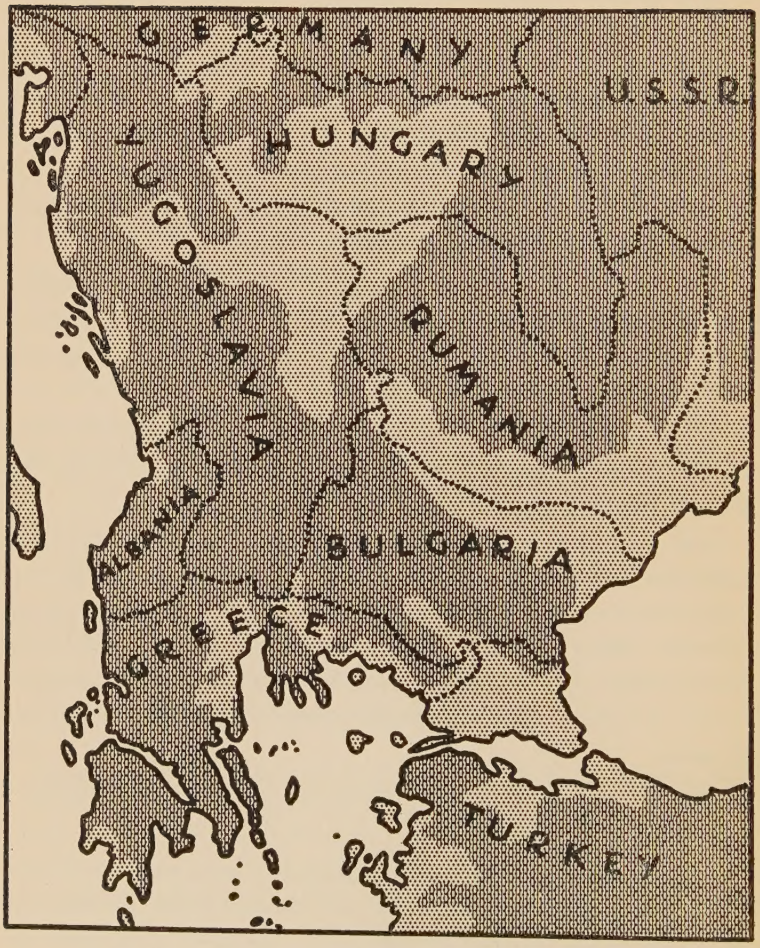
[5] *Geographically, Croatia and Slovenia are in the northern quarter of Yugoslavia, adjoining Germany, and the first to feel any German push southward. In terms of population, 8,000,000 of Yugoslavia's 16,000,000 population are Serbs, 4,000,000 are Croats, 1,000,000 are Slovenes, and the rest are minority groups—Albanians, Jews, Bulgarians, Macedonians, Rumanians, Magyars, Germans, and Turks.*

THE BALKANS

A Land of Mountains and Valleys



Darker regions are more than 2,000 feet above sea level

MR. PFLAUM: It upsets his plans. His military plans had to be changed in the last ten days.

MR. COLE: There are certain very important economic factors, however, that you must add to this whole business of morale, which, I grant you, is most important in modern war. The first is the fact that Hitler certainly expected to get breadstuffs and pork out of Yugoslav areas.

MR. GOTTSCHALK: That pork is important. You remember the famous "pig war" between Austria-Hungary and Serbia?[6]

MR. COLE: Quite so! There was a time when the old Austrian army was largely fed bacon and pork brought from Yugoslavia.

MR. PFLAUM: And the army that Hitler has in Bulgaria and Rumania undoubtedly depended on the Serbian peasants to deliver, and deliver peacefully.

MR. GOTTSCHALK: Then it would seem that Yugoslavia is an important breadbasket for Hitler, but I am wondering about mineral resources.

MR. COLE: That is a very important factor, particularly in view of the necessity of hardening modern metals for warfare. Germany has all kinds of metals in plentiful quantity except bauxite.

MR. GOTTSCHALK: Is Yugoslavia important for bauxite?[7]

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[6] *In 1905 and 1906 disputes between Austria-Hungary and Serbia over agricultural tariffs led to the so-called "pig war" in which Serbian pork exported to Austria-Hungary was subjected to discriminatory tariffs.*

[7] *Production of bauxite (used for aluminum) amounted to 400,000 metric tons in 1939, according to the "Minerals Yearbook." German production that same year amounted to only 20,000 tons, French to 680,000 tons, Greek to 180,000 tons, Hungarian to 540,000 tons, and Italian to 360,000 tons.*

MR. COLE: Yes, particularly in the south; in the mountains which will be defended as the last resort.

MR. GOTTSCHALK: I saw a statement recently to the effect that Yugoslavia produces more copper than any other European country. Is that significant?[8]

MR. COLE: It is probably less important than bauxite. Our general staff (which made a strategic study of raw materials, particularly minerals) has pointed out that the lack of bauxite is the greatest lacuna in the makeup of the whole German war economy.

MR. PFLAUM: Then you feel that the bauxite mines won't fall to the German armies very soon—that between them and the Germans lie the Serbian army?

MR. COLE: Quite so!

MR. GOTTSCHALK: Doesn't it happen that the most significantly fortified areas of Yugoslavia are around the mining regions?

MR. COLE: That is true, and in order to take a single ton of ore out of any one of those mines the Germans are going to have to pass over the bodies of several thousand dead Serbs in the mountains in the south.

MR. GOTTSCHALK: It seems very significant that Hitler has converted a group of potential allies into enemies from which only destruction and opposition can be expected.

MR. PFLAUM: And he has destroyed—or potentially destroyed—the roads and railways over which he intended to carry his stuff.

MR. GOTTSCHALK: Can we shed any light on the population problems of Yugoslavia? You said something about there being

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[8] *Of a world-production of copper in 1938 of 1,723,000 metric tons, Yugoslavia contributed 40,000 tons, Spain 30,000 tons, Germany 25,000 tons, and Norway, Finland, and Sweden a total of 42,000 tons together.*

16,000,000 people in Yugoslavia. That breaks down into various national groups, doesn't it?

MR. COLE: Yes, and two groups (the Slovenes and the Croats) will always be of dubious value to the Serbian army. I do not mean in the matter of personal bravery. These two peoples, belonging to the old Austrian Empire, fought very well in the last war. The Austrian national staff history ends on a note of great commendation to these peoples.

MR. GOTTSCHALK: Your point that the Croats are not dependable would mean that they would fight well on either side.

MR. COLE: Yes.

MR. PFLAUM: I don't think you ought to forget that the Croats know all this. They have read the history of the Austrian army. They know that the higher positions are in the hands of Serbs; that the Croats have been stationed where they can do little harm if they do turn out to be traitors.

MR. COLE: Yes, there is an interesting analogy here between the cases of the Czech army and the Yugoslav army. The Czech army had a number of German troop divisions in the Sudeten mountains—the mountain passes which would have had to be defended.

MR. PFLAUM: You mean at the time of Munich?[9]

MR. COLE: At the time of Munich. They could not count on those troops in those very important strategic fastnesses. Now it is different here, where the strategic areas which can be defended are held by the Serbs, the strong party.

MR. PFLAUM: And for ten days the Serbs have known that this was coming.

MR. COLE: For longer than ten days.

MR. PFLAUM: For ten days they have been pretty certain of it.

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[9] *In September, 1938.*

MR. COLE: Quite so!

MR. GOTTSCHALK: Cole, I yield to you as a military expert; yet it seems to me very important to point out that the Slovenes and Croats are not Sudeten Germans. For historical reasons they have no cause for feeling friendly to the old Austria-Hungary, which is now Germany or Hungary. As a consequence, it seems to me that you are arguing against yourself. These people are likely, therefore, to be more friendly to the Serbs.

MR. COLE: It does not necessarily follow that, because of the lack of friendship for the new Germany, they are more friendly toward Serbia. They have constantly (as you have noticed in the last few years) been a thorn in the sides of the Serbs.

MR. PFLAUM: Yes, but in the last few weeks this miracle we mentioned has taken place, and we have no reason to believe that, having given their all and having decided to go into this war after a long discussion in Zagreb, they are going to turn around and desert the people.[10]

MR. COLE: I am leery of these deathbed conversions. How can you tell what these peoples are going to do on the eve of a great military event?

MR. GOTTSCHALK: Pflaum, you have been in Yugoslavia, haven't you? Isn't it your impression that the Serbs are a very dominent element there? There are 8,000,000 Serbs in a population of a little more than 16,000,000.

MR. PFLAUM: There were 4,000,000 Croats and 8,000,000 Serbs. The Serbs had complete control of the country. In 1938 they had not yet given any autonomy to Croatia; but that didn't mean, and it doesn't mean today, that the Croats were being suppressed. They were quite happy under the new regime and getting along fine, and Zagreb was one of the neatest, most beautiful little cities in Europe.

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[10] *Zagreb is the capital of the Croatian area.*

MR. GOTTSCHALK: Aren't there some religious differences among the people in addition to these national differences?

MR. PFLAUM: The Croats are Roman Catholics and the Serbs are Greek Orthodox, but the difference is not very important. They are not going to kill each other over that.

MR. COLE: I agree that it doesn't greatly change the military picture. The army is largely Serbian and Montenegrin just from the composition of the state, and its leadership and high command are Serbs. Those units, in exposed positions, which will have to withdraw from the north—are commanded and officered by Croats.

MR. PFLAUM: I want to tell you just one little story from Belgrade, which indicates (to my mind, at any rate) that the Serbs—who are darn good soldiers, and who know the strategy of the Balkans as well as anyone—did not go into this war blind. In 1938 and early in 1939 the British were then talking to the authorities in Belgrade about the possibility of resisting Hitler, and, as far as I could tell, they insisted that they might resist Hitler, but they wanted a certain kind of shell, a certain kind of gun, and they wanted them *delivered*. I have an idea that some of those things have been delivered and that the British for once have come through on time.

MR. GOTTSCHALK: That raises the question of the military effectiveness of the Yugoslav army. Cole, as a military expert, I suppose we ought to let you tell us something about the Yugoslav army.

MR. COLE: The Yugoslav army is the best army in the Balkans on the basis of what we know about it in theory. It numbers probably over a million men—maybe a million and a quarter men—but of this number not more than three-fourths of a million can be armed. They just don't have enough rifles to go around.

MR. GOTTSCHALK: There is also the fact that they seem to have variegated armaments.

MR. COLE: That is quite true, particularly in heavy and medium field artillery. They have artillery of three different types—the German, the French, and now some of our 75 mm. type.

MR. PFLAUM: And I have always heard that over there in the Balkans the people to watch out for were the old peasant fighters—those historic peasant groups which have fought in the mountains for their homeland since 'way back. The Serbs have been independent, you know, for over a hundred years.

MR. GOTTSCHALK: But in this new type of warfare, where you shoot at people from above as well as from on the ground. . . . .

MR. PFLAUM: I still have a lot of faith in the old type of warfare in Serbia. If you had ever seen those mountains you would not neglect to take them into consideration.

MR. COLE: I am afraid the Serbs do not face quite the same job this time as they faced in the last war. In the last war they fought in one of the most important and bravest retreats that an army ever took under disastrous conditions.[11] Today, however, they have to look out for attack from the air, and that is going to be much different.

MR. PFLAUM: That is a technical question, but I have a feeling that once they are pushed down to their southern mountains—that is what must happen, because the Germans can move just about as fast as they did in Poland. When the Germans hit those mountains I doubt very much whether those planes will count.

MR. GOTTSCHALK: How are supplies going to be brought to Yugoslavia? They have to come from Greece, don't they? There are no good Yugoslavian seaports.

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[11] *In 1915 Serb troops evacuated their country and retreated to the island of Corfu. They were then transported by the British to Salonika, and 100,000 men were reorganized there into troops which later reconquered Serbia from the Central Powers.*

MR. COLE: We have no reason to believe, despite the destruction of a portion of the Italian fleet, that it would be possible to move supplies through the Adriatic to be landed on Serb coastal ports, and even then they would have to be moved by cogwheel railways up the sides of mountains. The Serbs will have to fight during the initial weeks of the war with what they now have, and they certainly have very little in the way of artillery munitions.

MR. PFLAUM: Just one minute! They will have to fight with what they have and with what the British have brought in, and with what British troops can be brought in. We had a story early this week about British generals having been down in southern Yugoslavia looking over the land and discussing aid. They might be in there now. We don't know.

MR. COLE: I am inclined to question the efficacy of British aid until I see whether the British are able to give it.

MR. PFLAUM: I don't blame you for being cautious.

MR. COLE: The Yugoslavs don't need manpower; they don't need generals. They need *supplies*. The Yugoslav general staffs are among the finest in Eastern Europe. There is no question about that.

MR. PFLAUM: I agree with you, and Simović is an old-time fighter and well respected in all military circles.[12]

MR. COLE: Quite so!

MR. GOTTSCHALK: Remember that on the map Germany, Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria, and Italy, as well as Albania, are on various sides of Yugoslavia.

MR. PFLAUM: It hasn't been shown very definitely yet that Italy can do very much besides retreat in Albania; we don't know

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[12] *General Dusan Simović, present leader of the government, who seized power in a coup d'état March 26–27, 1941, forcing out the old government which had signed a pact with the Axis two days earlier.*

THE BALKANS

Political Boundaries—April, 1941

that Bulgaria is in the war; we don't think Rumania is going to leave the Russian frontier open in order to jump into the fight; and the other day the Prime Minister of Hungary, Teleki, killed himself because he did not want to send the Hungarian army in there.[13]

MR. GOTTSCHALK: That raises the question of possible strategy, both on the defensive and offensive, in Yugoslavia.

MR. PFLAUM: We have been talking about German strategy as if Germany had everything to say in this picture in the Balkans. I claim that there are also strategy guys in London, and there is one man sitting in London who probably has a pretty fair idea of what this is all about, and he may even have planned it right up to this moment.

MR. COLE: Well, I'll have to see an equal for a German theorist before I believe that he exists.

MR. PFLAUM: Are you from Missouri?

MR. COLE: In this particular case, yes! I had lunch yesterday with a foreign military observer (a Frenchman) who said: "You must remember that we Frenchmen know that the English are very good in fighting colonial wars. We fought them in all the colonies, India and Africa. They do very well there, but they never know how to handle an expeditionary force." Historically, he was right.

MR. GOTTSCHALK: Now you people are telling about strategy in the broad. I'd like to get down to particulars. Isn't there a very significant spot known as the Monastir Gap, and another

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[13] *Count Paul Teleki, the Hungarian Prime Minister, killed himself April 3, 1941. It was widely rumored that German demands on Hungary were excessive, even going to the extent of insisting that Hungary join any future German war against Yugoslavia; it was suggested that Teleki, who advocated "collaboration" with the Nazis, committed suicide as a protest against further concessions and as a warning of what was to come.*

very significant spot on the map known as Salonika, and aren't those the immediate objectives of the German army?

MR. PFLAUM: That's right up Cole's gap!

MR. COLE: In this particular case you notice that the Germans are extended down to the Balkans—a long line reaching to the Bulgarian frontier. This line leaves the right flank of the German army exposed, and on that right flank is camped one of the best armies in the world—except for the fact that it must fight on the defensive in the mountains because it does not have planes to cover it, and it does not have tanks to operate on the plains.

MR. GOTTSCHALK: By "the best army in the world on its right flank" you mean the Yugoslav army?

MR. COLE: Exactly!

MR. GOTTSCHALK: On their left flank there is the possibility of Turkish opposition.

MR. COLE: The Turks are very good indeed, but notice the relation of the Turks to this other theater of war. They are just perched on the edge of Europe; they can only attack after the Germans have extended themselves further into the Balkans.

MR. PFLAUM: That sounds to me like a good time to attack. I mean, assuming that Mr. Churchill has gotten the Germans to walk into this war that they did not want (and they are in it now), and then he has Turkey ready to jump in, maybe with Russian help, at the right time, the strategy this time might not be all German.

MR. GOTTSCHALK: But Turkey's position depends largely upon what Russia will do. Would you care to risk a guess on that, Pflaum?

MR. PFLAUM: No, let's leave Russia out of this, because I always get in trouble every time I risk a guess on Russia.

MR. GOTTSCHALK: Who doesn't!

MR. COLE: I think you ought to add the fact that maybe the Germans will be able to carry out the main objective stroke, which is to seize Salonika and divide the English, the Greeks, and the Yugoslavs on one side from the Turks on the other. At that point the Turks might well see no reason to risk their necks.

MR. PFLAUM: Yes, but I am from Missouri and I've got to see them do it. They haven't done it yet. They have a tough road in front of them. Don't you agree with me?

MR. GOTTSCHALK: You are both from Missouri, apparently. Now I must stick out my neck, and I am willing to do that in two ways. I'd like to suggest that there is a possibility that the Serbians may take the offensive.

MR. PFLAUM: In Albania?

MR. GOTTSCHALK: In Albania and across the Italian border in the neighborhood of Trieste and Fiume. Does that strike you as perfect nonsense?

MR. COLE: Not "perfect nonsense," because the Serbs apparently have always fought on the proposition that war is fun, so one might as well get as much fun out of it as possible. But here, in the case of the disposition of the Serb armies, at the moment there is only one army in the south. It is the sixth army; it is the weakest part of their army. The three important armies are strung along the eastern frontier, facing the Germans.

MR. GOTTSCHALK: The strategy would seem to be for the Yugoslavs to clear out of the plains and go into the mountains. The latest reports are that they have already done that in Belgrade. Your suggestion is that they would go on the defensive in Albania, too.

MR. COLE: They might perhaps put a little pressure on the Italians, but they will not strike the main blow there. Their job is to hang on.

MR. PFLAUM: May I interrupt you? You asked me to make a guess about Russia. I'll make a guess about Albania. I think that sixth army, even if it is a weak army, might be strong enough to clean out Albania, because the Italians are reeling; the Fascist Empire is about gone. We don't know exactly what the Serbian troops are, admittedly, but they might be strong enough to clean out Albania.

MR. GOTTSCHALK: The pincher might work on Albania, in other words.

MR. PFLAUM: I think that is where it is going to work, and work mighty quick.

MR. COLE: It is possible; but notice that the Greeks have not made any important advances in the last two weeks. Why? Because six divisions have been moved over to menace the Germans as they moved toward Salonika.

MR. PFLAUM: But there is another answer to that. They might be preparing an offensive to join the Yugoslavs, so they have waited during the last ten days or two weeks.

MR. GOTTSCHALK: That is all very much up in the air and I should like, therefore, to change the subject . . . .

MR. PFLAUM: Down to the mountains?

MR. GOTTSCHALK: . . . . to one very much more on the ground. The next question that I should like to raise now is the vital one of what effect this would have on America.

MR. PFLAUM: Let's get Cole's opinion on that.

MR. COLE: I seem to be the gloomy one here all the way through.

MR. GOTTSCHALK: Perhaps you are the only practical one of the three of us.

MR. PFLAUM: I am a dreamer; I've always been a dreamer.

MR. COLE: In any event, it seems to me that when the German army started to march, the American people took several long steps toward active participation in the second World War. By that I mean toward the actual use of manpower and the loss of lives.

MR. PFLAUM: Tell us that beautiful story now! Go ahead and tell it to us!

MR. COLE: The reason is very simple: the Macedonian front was simply stalemate—nothing much happened; but today perhaps we are going to see this war of movement which took place in the West bog down and the two armies come to grips in the Balkans for months.

MR. PFLAUM: You mean that the British, the Greeks, the Yugoslavians, and maybe even the Turks will get in there with big armies against a big German army . . . .

MR. COLE: And batter away.

MR. PFLAUM: . . . . on the Macedonian front and just shoot each other as they did on the western front?

MR. COLE: If that happens, what can we expect? We can expect that the British (who have up to the moment gotten everything they asked for) will say, "We are losing so many lives per month we cannot replace and train manpower; you must now send American forces."

MR. GOTTSCHALK: I want to get back a bit, as a historian, to something that happened earlier. Do you think American intervention in any way, or American influence in any way, occasioned this Yugoslav situation?

MR. PFLAUM: In the beginning I said that the lend-lease bill had something to do with what happened in Belgrade. It did by giving the President a free hand, by giving him the chance to promise

the Belgrade government that if they did this they would get certain kinds of help from us. Last night, in Washington, Colonel Knox said that help is on the way. I don't know whether it is, but he said it was.

MR. GOTTSCHALK: You are of the opinion, then, that American diplomatic action is in part a factor for the Yugoslavian situation at this moment?

MR. PFLAUM: We sent the Greeks French 75's; we sent them airplanes. Why shouldn't we send the Yugoslavs the same thing?

MR. GOTTSCHALK: You think we are committed to Yugoslavia to an extent beyond that of moral aid?

MR. PFLAUM: Without any doubt at all, we are committed to any country that fights Germany. That is the wording of the lend-lease bill.

MR. COLE: Yes, but can you actually implement the bill? We don't know. We don't even know that the British who are on the spot at Suez can put troops into the Balkans. We have no proof of it yet.

MR. PFLAUM: No, sir! We have no proof of it; and if you want to insist upon being pessimistic about it, I'll agree with you. But there is a good chance of it, and evidently the people in Belgrade thought there was a chance of it, and that is important. They didn't go into this blind.

MR. COLE: I am inclined to think that on their past record the Serbs would have fought anyway, and that it may be possible that they will get aid from the English; that the English will be able to put troops into the Balkans.

MR. PFLAUM: They have troops in the Balkans. We know that.

MR. COLE: I am inclined to think that the figures are greatly

exaggerated. If they have more than 100,000, I'll be greatly surprised, and I'll bet that two divisions would be more like it.

MR. PFLAUM: I hate to say that I agree with you on that.

MR. GOTTSCHALK: During the last war that was true; they talked about 150,000 until about 1916.

MR. PFLAUM: But during the last war a man named Winston Churchill was not running the British government. Today he is running it.

MR. COLE: He can't get over the fact that there is only one railroad which may be easily destroyed; that there are five ports in Greece, only two of which can be used for disembarking troops, and which can be bombed from the air.

MR. PFLAUM: Where is this big fight going to take place?

MR. COLE: I believe in that Monastir Gap.

MR. PFLAUM: Why there?

MR. COLE: That is where the highways of the Balkans come together: the Monastir Gap; the line of the Vardar; the line of the Struma River; and at this point I believe the decision will be won.

MR. GOTTSCHALK: Your contention that the United States is likely to be dragged into this is due to your feeling that this war is going to bog down into a trench war or mountain war. Now aren't there two other possibilities: either that the English will be successful in carrying on an offensive against the Germans or that the Germans will do as Hitler announced in his general orders this morning—make a new Dunkirk out of Salonika? In either of those events the United States will not be involved.

MR. COLE: It is quite possible.

MR. PFLAUM: Or that the pacts that Russia has made (and here you have me talking about Russia!) with Turkey and with

Yugoslavia yesterday really mean something and that Germany is going to be threatened on her eastern frontier in more places than one.[14]

MR. GOTTSCHALK: There are many things about which we have disagreed, and many things upon which we have agreed, but we agree only that we don't know very much about them.

We have disagreed on four very important points; upon whether or not the Yugoslavs are a united people; as to the ability of the Yugoslav army to put up a good fight; as to the likelihood of the Yugoslav offensive; and about the chance of American entrance into the war. On the other hand, there are several factors upon which this war may turn, about which we agree we know nothing. We don't know the amount of aid that America can send or the amount of aid that England is in position to give. On the whole, it seems pretty risky to make any prediction, but our military expert seems to think that in any case this act will change a war of movement into a war of position.

---

[14] *Just before the German invasion of Yugoslavia and Greece it was announced that a treaty of nonaggression had been signed in Moscow between the U.S.S.R. and Yugoslavia.*

SUGGESTED READINGS

BALDWIN, HANSON W., "A Mountain Fortress," *New York Times*, April 4, 1941. *A discussion of the terrain of Yugoslavia and its military significance.*

DRUCKER, PETER F.; BURKS, RICHARD; and GOTTSCHALK, LOUIS, *The Balkans Aflame*, a University of Chicago ROUND TABLE, October 20, 1940. *A general background discussion of the Balkans.*

"Freedom Takes a Bastion," *Time*, April 7, 1941. *The story of the seizure of power by General Simović and the nationalist coup d'état which was the beginning of the present Yugoslav resistance to Hitler.*

FUQUA, MAJOR GENERAL STEPHEN O., "That Second Front," *Newsweek*, April 7, 1941. *Some military considerations related to the opening of hostilities in Germany's "back yard."*

———, "The Salonika Front—Then and Now," *Newsweek*, March 31, 1941. *Fighting in the southern Balkan regions, 1914–18, and today. Maps of the fronts in both periods and of the present distribution of German troops in Europe.*

PRIBICHEVICH, STOYAN, "Yugoslav Explosion," *Nation*, April 5, 1941. *A brief survey of the causes behind, and some of the possible results of, the coup d'état by which a militant anti-Nazi government rules Yugoslavia.*

"Yugoslavia at Marathon," *New Republic*, April 7, 1941. *A recapitulation of the factors operating in the present Yugoslav crisis and the strategies of the Allies and the Axis in bringing the war to the Balkans.*

OBJECTIVE QUESTIONS FOR EXAMINATION

The answers to the following questions may be found in the text of the broadcast, and page references are provided to assist in locating the answers.

*

1. What recent American legislation is said by the ROUND TABLE experts to be closely related to recent events in the Balkans? Page 2.
2. List two of the three military events cited as being related to the new German attack in southeastern Europe. Pages 2–3.
3. Identify Stjepan Radić and the meaning of his death to Yugoslavia. Page 4.
4. What is the total population of Yugoslavia? Page 5.
5. Of the total Yugoslav population, what proportion are Croats and Slovenes? Page 5.
6. List two foodstuffs which Hitler hoped to acquire for his armies from Yugoslavia. Page 7.
7. What mineral resource, necessary to modern warfare and not available in any large quantity in Germany, may be found in Yugoslavia? Pages 7–8.
8. The Croats and Slovenes (referred to in question 5) fought with and against whom in the first World War? Page 9.
9. What is the size of the Yugoslav army and the quality of its armament? Page 11.
10. What, according to the ROUND TABLE authorities, is the main military objective of the Germans? Page 16.
11. How many British troops are estimated to be in the Balkans? Pages 20–21.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The following questions of wider scope, intended for discussion, are suggested by the broadcast, and answers may be found in the literature on the subject listed in the section "Suggested Readings," found on page 23.

*

1. On the basis of the ROUND TABLE discussion and other military information you have been able to gather about the present Balkan struggle, estimate in quantity and quality the forces involved and suggest possible lines of Axis and Allied strategy.
2. What contribution did the United States make toward creating a Yugoslav will to resist Hitler? Do you agree that American legislation had much to do with stiffening Yugoslav morale? What, if any, "promises" do you believe our government may have made to the Yugoslavs?
3. Do you agree with the thesis that the outbreak of hostilities in the Balkans has brought the United States closer to participation in the war? If so, indicate why; if not, do you think America is any *farther* from war than before? Discuss.
4. What characteristics of the Yugoslav state have, in the past, caused disunity in the nation? Do you think unity has now been found, or can now be found, to carry on the war against Germany?
5. Summarize the economic resources of Yugoslavia and indicate those of value to Germany. Do you feel the Nazis' chance of eventually maximizing Yugoslavia's resources are increased or diminished by the present war? Discuss.
6. Compare and contrast the position of the Balkans in the present war with that which they took in World War I. What similarities and dissimilarities do you find? Discuss.

The Listeners' Round Table . . . .

The ROUND TABLE *invites listeners to comment upon the broadcast, and the following excerpts are from letters received following the discussion of "Should America Convoy to Britain?" March 30, 1941.*

*

Perhaps War

We have already showed in what direction our interests lie; we are already carrying on an unlegal war; so, by all means use convoys for British aid and perhaps actual war involving the U.S. can be prevented.

L. P. B., Jr., Massachusetts

*

Not the Will

On today's broadcast the "referee" stated that the American people had decided that more aid should be sent to Britain. It is my opinion that what is being done here is not the will of the American people any more perhaps than what is being done in Germany is the will of the German people.

A. F. S., Montana

*

American Customs

Now is the accepted time to help Britain if we hope to preserve any of our free American customs. If it means convoy, then we must convoy; if that means war, then it will have to be.

G. R. M., New Mexico

Amazement

It is a source of continual amazement to me that democratic exchange of opinion can continue in the face of illogical, discourteous, and inconsistent argument as is so often displayed on radio forums. May I congratulate you on having—as a rule—participants like two of today's three who can discuss material without raising their blood pressure!

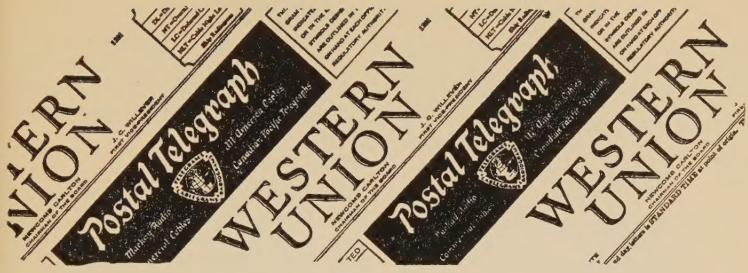
O. M. N., Minnesota

*

Mein Kampf

When will the "three" meet again? That is easy; after our naval convoys have been established, then your ROUND TABLE will bring up the next logical question for discussion—"Shall the U.S. aid Britain by convoying an A.E.F. to Europe, Africa, and the Orient?" Your Mr. Utley, like his fellow-anglophiles, has all along consistently adopted the Hitler technique in *Mein Kampf* of conquering one nation (step) at a time to gain the purpose of getting our country in a war, not necessarily for defense, but very likely one of aggression for the Allies, as in 1918.

A. R. R., California



LA FOLLETTE YOUR RADIO COMMENTS SHOULD BE MOST CONVINCING TO ALL AMERICANS. I CONGRATULATE YOU ON YOUR FORTITUDE.

R. M. H., CALIFORNIA

*

CONGRATULATIONS UTLEY ON ALL YOUR POINTS ON ALL YOUR DISCUSSIONS. YOU ARE ABSOLUTELY RIGHT. CARRY ON.

V. M. C., NORTH CAROLINA

*

MORE POWER TO YOU GOVERNOR. KEEP ON STATING THE FACTS.

R. J. C., WASHINGTON, D.C.

*

MORE POWER TO YOU UTLEY. ENJOYED VERY MUCH HEARING YOUR CONTENTIONS THIS P.M. LIKE OTHER TRUE AMERICANS WILLING TO FIGHT ON THE FIELD OF BATTLE AS I HAVE ALREADY DONE AND DIE FOR TRUE DEMOCRACY.

N. K., NEW YORK

*

LA FOLLETTE KEEP UP YOUR OPPOSITION AGAINST THE AMERICAN CONVOY SHIPS TO GREAT BRITAIN.

H. E. B., PENNSYLVANIA

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137. *Warmongers and Appeasers*
138. *Polls and the Election*
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141. *Art and Our Warring World*
142. *The Soviet Union and America*
143. *Is Hitler Revolutionizing Britain?*
144. *Where Are Those 50,000 Planes?*
146. *1951: The Next Decade in Education*

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147. *More Aid to Britain Now?*
148. *Is This Our War?*
149. *Morale: First Line of Defense?*
150. *Can Capitalism Defend America?*
152. *Can the Americas Be Invaded?*
153. *Guns or Butter?*
154. *Dilemma in the Far East.*
155. *How To Fight Nazi Propaganda*
156. *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*
157. *Strikes and National Defense*
158. *Defense Economics.*
159. *Should America Convoy to Britain?* March 30

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City	*Call Letters*	*Kilocycles*	*City*	*Call Letters*	*Kilocycles*
Allentown, Pa.	WSAN	1470	Memphis, Tenn.	WMC	790
Altoona, Pa.	WFBG	1340	Miami, Fla.	WIOD	610
Asheville, N.C.	WISE	1400	Nashville, Tenn.	WSM	650
Atlanta, Ga.	WSB	750	New York, N.Y	WEAF	660
Baltimore, Md.	WFBR	1300	Norfolk, Va.	WTAR	790
Boston, Mass.	WNAC	1260	Philadelphia, Pa.	KYW	1060
Buffalo, N.Y.	WBEN	930	Pittsburgh, Pa.	WCAE	1250
Charleston, S.C.	WTMA	1250	Portland, Me.	WCSH	970
Charlotte, N.C.	WSOC	1240	Providence, R.I.	WJAR	920
Cincinnati, Ohio	WSAI	1360	Raleigh, N.C.	WPTF	680
Cleveland, Ohio	WTAM	1100	Richmond, Va.	WMBG	1380
Columbia, S.C	WIS	560	Rochester, N.Y.	WHAM	1180
Dayton, Ohio	WING	1410	Savannah, Ga.	WSAV	1340
Detroit, Mich.	WWJ	950	Schenectady, N.Y.	WGY	810
Florence, S.C.	WOLS	1230	Springfield, Ohio	WIZE	1340
Grand Rapids, Mich.	WOOD	1300	Tampa, Fla.	WFLA	970
Greenville, S.C.	WFBC	1330	Toledo, O.	WSPD	1370
Jacksonville, Fla.	WJAX	930	Washington, D.C.	WRC	980
Johnstown, Pa.	WJAC	1400	Wilmington, Del.	WDEL	1150
Lakeland, Fla.	WLAK	1340	Winston-Salem, N.C.	WSJS	600
Lima, Ohio	WLOK	1240	Zanesville, Ohio	WHIZ	1240

1:30 P.M. CENTRAL STANDARD TIME

Birmingham, Ala.	WBRC	960	Mankato, Minn.	KYSM	1230
Bismarck, N.D.	KFYR	550	Milwaukee, Wis.	WTMJ	620
Bristol, Tenn.	WOPI	1490	Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minn.	KSTP	1500
Chicago, Ill.	WMAQ	670	New Orleans, La.	WSMB	1350
Duluth, Minn., and Superior, Wis.	WEBC	1320	Oklahoma City, Okla.	WKY	930
El Paso, Texas	KTSM	1380	Omaha, Neb.	WOW	590
Evansville, Ind.	WGBF	1280	Pittsburg, Kans.	KOAM	810
Fargo, N.D.	WDAY	970	Rochester, Minn.	KROC	1340
Fort Wayne, Ind.	WGL	1450	St. Cloud, Minn.	KFAM	1450
Hattiesburg, Miss.	WFOR	1400	St. Louis, Mo.	KSD	550
Jackson, Miss.	WJDX	1300	Shreveport, La.	KTBS	1480
Kansas City, Mo.	WDAF	610	Sioux Falls, S.D.	KSOO	1140
Kingsport, Tenn.	WKPT	1400	Springfield, Mo.	KGBX	1260
Laurel, Miss.	WAML	1340	Terre Haute, Ind.	WBOW	1230
Little Rock, Ark.	KARK	920	Tulsa, Okla.	KVOO	1170
Louisville, Ky.	WAVE	970	Wichita, Kans.	KANS	1240
Madison, Wis.	WIBA	1310			

12:30 P.M. MOUNTAIN STANDARD TIME

Albuquerque, N.M.	KOB	1030	Phoenix, Ariz.	KTAR	620
Billings, Mont.	KGHL	790	Pocatello, Ida.	KSEI	930
Boise, Ida.	KIDO	1380	Safford, Ariz.	KGLV	1450
Bozeman, Mont.	KRBM	1450	Salt Lake City, Utah	KDYL	1320
Butte, Mont.	KGIR	1370	Tucson, Ariz.	KVOA	1290
Denver, Colo.	KOA	850	Twin Falls, Ida.	KTFI	1270
Helena, Mont.	KPFA	1240	Yuma, Arizona	KYUM	1240

11:30 A.M. PACIFIC STANDARD TIME

Fresno, Cal.	KMJ	580	San Francisco, Cal.	KPO	680
Los Angeles, Cal.	KFI	640	Seattle, Wash.	KOMO	950
Medford, Ore.	KMED	1440	Spokane, Wash.	KHQ	590
Portland, Ore.	KGW	620			

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Honolulu, T.H.	KGU	760	
Columbus, Ohio	WCOL	1230	7:00 P.M. E.S.T.
Amarillo, Texas	KGNC (Monday)	1440	8:30 P.M. C.S.T.

The ROUND TABLE *stands ready to bring authoritative speakers to its microphone to discuss any of the following topics which may assume primary importance during the coming week:*

SHIP SEIZURES

Is Uncle Sam Getting Tough?

THE AMERICAS

Unity—for What?

UNION WITH BRITAIN?

•

APRIL 13, 1941

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